



## **Independence Academy**

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### **Board Meeting Minutes**

January 26, 2026

5:00 P.M-Commons Area

Brought to order: 5:03 pm

Present:

- Brad Thompson
- Thomas Gibson
- Jane Pizem
- Burke Martin
- Lisa Sutherland

#### **I. Staff and Student Celebrations:**

- A. Kindra Nicodemus talked about the book her oldest daughter wrote and read it to the elementary students at IACS last week.
- B. Mrs. Henry shared updates on art competitions and places students took recently. Our art program continues to thrive.

#### **II. Public Comment:** Time-limited TBA – individuals may make public comments, limited to items on the agenda and two (2) minutes. The Governing Board asks that each member complete a public comment card, available in the front office, before the meeting commences. Public comment cards should be given to the Executive Director, who will then deliver them to the Governing Board President.

- A. None at this time

#### **III. Approval of the November 2025 Board Minutes.**

**Motion:** Thomas Gibson

**Second:** Burke Martin

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**IV. Approval of the October 2025 Financials.**

**Motion:** Jane Pizem

**Second:** Burke Martin

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**V. Approval of the November 2025 Financials.**

**Motion:** Burke Martin

**Second:** Thomas Gibson

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**VI. Approval of the December 2025 Financials.**

A. Jane asked questions about special education and universal Pre-K monies in the financials, and how often IACS receives these funds. Lisa explained where those funds come from and how they are utilized.

B. Brad inquired about funding for lunches. Lisa Gonsalves informed him that it is state funding and that the school does not pay for it.

**Motion:** Thomas Gibson

**Second:** Jane Pizem

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**VII. Approval of the 2026/2027 Academic Calendar.**

**Motion:** Thomas Gibson

**Second:** Burke Martin

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**VIII. Approval of the readopted budget.**

A. Thomas Gibson inquired about the \$220,000.00 in capital projects. Lisa informed him that the project was already complete and that it was a new roof for the entire modular building.

**Motion:** Burke Martin

**Second:** Jane Pizem

**Vote:** 5-0 vote passes

**IX. Elementary Principal Report**

1. Instruction- Winter scores look great, and students are making sufficient or more-than-sufficient progress.
2. Upper elementary has moved to a rotation teaching style to provide more targeted support to all students.

**B. Culture**

1. Mrs. Harris came in over winter break and installed Peace Trails in elementary classes that requested them. The 3rd-grade students returned to class after the break and taught the other students how to use the Peace Trails.

2. Award Ceremony for Elementary Students - The entire elementary student population had their semester 1 awards ceremony in the auditorium, and it was amazing to have all the students in one space, celebrating one another.

## **X. Middle School Principal Report**

### **A. Instruction**

1. Scheduling changes are settled, and kids are adjusting to semester two classes.
2. Theater class is thriving
3. Track has been offered as a new class and is very popular

### **B. Culture**

1. Chitty Chitty Bang Bang was amazing
  2. Programming and scheduling for next year is underway and is getting a lot of interest again.
  3. Many students want to stay in their programs and are giving positive feedback.
  4. When checking in with the new teacher, there is a lot of positive feedback.
  5. Retention of middle school students next year is very strong, and more intent-to-enroll forms are coming in every day.
- Burke Martin pointed out that students can create an alternative Gmail account and access anything on the internet. Audrey stated that she is aware and is working on a solution. Lisa said she will check into the loophole as well.
  - Burke Martin pointed out that the STEM program application for Central is already closed and asked why that had not been communicated to parents. Audrey Shrader informed them that they did not communicate with IACS about those deadlines.

## **XI. Executive Director's Report.**

### **A. Operations**

1. S&P Global rating game back at a BBB-, which is great considering IACS took on an additional 7 million dollars in debt
2. The investor call is scheduled for February 13th

### **B. Community Outreach-**

1. The grand opening was a huge success and had a great turnout
2. We have lots of community entities interested in renting the space in the Event Center
3. In February, a group of teachers will attend the Colorado League Leadership Summit in Denver.

### **C. Facilities Report -**

1. Everyone is getting used to the Event Center, and IACS is working with the various vendors to resolve issues with the new building, including thermostats and the AV system.

## **XII. Executive Session CRS Section 24-6-402 (4)(f)**

C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4) The members of a local public body subject to this part 4, upon the announcement by the local public body to the public of the topic for discussion in the executive session, including specific citation to the provision of this subsection (4) authorizing the body to meet in an executive session and identification of the particular matter to be discussed in as much detail as possible without compromising the purpose for which the executive session is authorized, and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the quorum present, after such announcement, may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting and for the sole purpose of considering any of the following matters; except that no adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action, except the review, approval, and amendment of the minutes of an executive session recorded pursuant to subparagraph (II) of paragraph (d.5) of subsection (2) of this section, shall occur at any executive session that is not open to the public.

**Adjourned: 6:24 pm**